

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OSLO 04141 101330Z

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ACTION CU-05

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USIAC

FOR: USIA-RICHARD B. JOYCE, ICS/D/A; IWE
STATE- CU/PC, CU/PU, CU/WE

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: GUTHRIE THEATER FOR BERGEN FESTIVAL

REF: TYAN-RANTANEN TELCON

1. IN THE REF TELCON IT WAS AGREED I WOULD PROVIDE YOU WITH THE
BACKGROUND TO DATE IN OUR EFFORTS TO BRING THE GUTHRIE THEATER
TO THE BERGEN FESTIVAL FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE WEEK BEGINNING MAY 22.

2. THE INITIAL APPROACH TO THE GUTHRIE WAS MADE EARLY LAST YEAR.
WER WERE INTERESTED BECAUSE OF GUTHRIE'S PROMINENCE AS A REPERTOIRE
COMPANY AND ESPECIALLY BECUASE OF ITS LOCATION IN A MAJOR AREA OF
SCANDINAVIAN SETTLEMENT. 1975 IS THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF NORWEGIAN
EMIGRATION TO THE U.S. AND WE HOPE TO USE THE OCCASION TO LAUNCH
AN EFFORT AT RESTORING SOME OF THE GOODWILL WHICH ERODED IN NOR-
WEGIAN-AMERICAN RELATIONS IN RECENT YEARS AS A RESULT OF LEFTIST
EXPLOITATION OF THE WAR IN S.E. ASIA.

3. MOST OF THIS EFFORT WILL BE ALONG CULTURAL LINES, AND A MAJOR
SHOWING AT BERGEN IS VERY IMPORTANT TO IT. EVEN IF IT WERE NOT
THE ANNIVERSARY OF NORWEGIAN EMIGRATION, THE POST FEELS THAT U.S.
REPRESENTATION AT BERGEN HAS BECOME MUCH SMALLER THAN DESIRABLE
FOR A MAJOR EUROPEAN FESTIVAL WHICH DRAWS GROUPS SUCH AS
THE PRAGUE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, THE BERLINER ENSEMBLE FROM EAST
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 OSLO 04141 101330Z

GERMANY, THE MOSCOW SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, ETC.

4. THIS YEAR'S THEME FOR THEATER PRESENTATIONS AT THE FESTIVAL IS THE WORK OF IBSEN. THE GUTHRIE WILL DO "HEDDA GABLER" AND JOHN GABRIEL BOREMAN" PLUS AN AMERICAN PLAY WHICH HAS NOT YET BEEN SELECTED, ALTHOUGH POSSIBILITIES INCLUDE "NO TIME FOR COMEDY" AND "STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE".

5. THE GUTHRIE IS VERY INTERESTED IN MAKING THE TRIP, WHICH WILL BE THE FIRST TIME IT HAS GONE ABROAD. FESTIVAL DIRECTOR SVEN HENNING RECENTLY TRAVELLED TO U.S. ON AN IVP GRANT AND WHILE THERE DISCUSSED THE ENTIRE PROJECT WITH THE GUTHRIE THEATER DIRECTOR MICHAEL LANGHAM AND MANAGING DIRECTOR DONALD SCHOENBAUM.

6. THE COST OF SUCH A TRIP ACCORDING TO GUTHRIE IS \$90,000.00. BERGEN CAN COME UP WITH \$20,000.00. AMBASSADOR BYRNE IS HEADING A DRIVE HERE AT THE EMBASSY TO CONTACT PRIVATE FIRMS DOING BUSINESS IN NORWAY TO TRY TO RAISE THE DIFFERENCE. IN ADDITION TO LETTERS WHICH ARE GOING OUT THIS WEEK TO THE HEAD OFFICES IN THE U.S. THE AMBASSADOR PLANS TO MEET PERSONALLY WITH LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES OF THOSE FIRMS. MEANWHILE, WE HAVE ASKED STATE DEPARTMENT'S OFFICE OF PRIVATE COOPERATION TO HELP (SEE OSLO 4068).

7 GUTHRIE ASKED THE TWO MINNESOTA SENATORS TO HELP AND BOTH CONTACTED THE DEPARTMENT WHICH THEN CONTACTED THE CAO IN OSLO TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE PROGRESS OF THE FUND-RAISING. THERE APPARENTLY IS, HOWEVER, LITTLE STATE CAN DO IN THE WAY OF DIRECT SUPPORT, ACCORDING TO TALKS FESTIVAL DIRECTOR HENNING HAD AT STATE AND ALSO ACCORDING TO RANTANEN OF IWE WHO RECENTLY LOOKED INTO THE MATTER.

8. WE ARE AWARE THAT ICS IS CONSIDERING SENDING A THEATER TROUPE TO EUROPE AND WONDERED IF SUCH A TROUPE COULD COME AT THE TIME OF THE FESTIVAL AND INCLUDE BERGEN IN ITS ITINERARY, IF THE GUTHRIE ARRANGEMENTS FAIL. OR, BETTER FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW, COULD THE THEATER TROUPE ICS SENDS OUT BE THE GUTHRIE THEATER AND, OF COURSE, COME TO BERGEN FOR THE FESTIVAL? ALTHOUGH THE GUTHRIE WOULD DO BOTH IBSEN AND AN AMERICAN PLAY HERE, IT COULD TOUR WITH THE AMERICAN PLAY, POSSIBLY SOMETHING MORE CONTEMPORARY THAN WHAT THEY ARE NOW PLANNING.

9. THE DEADLINE FOR A DECISION FOR BOTH GUTHRIE AND THE BERGEN FESTIVAL IS SEPT. 30. MEANWHILE, ANYTHING THAT YOU CAN DO WILL BE UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 OSLO 04141 101330Z

APPRECIATED. WHEREAS THE QUALITY OF LAST YEAR'S AMERICAN PARTICIPATION CAN HARDLY BE SURPASSED, WE WOULD LIKE TO MAINTAIN THAT STANDARD WITH A BIT MORE QUANTITY IN 1975.

10. IT MAY BE WORTH NOTING THAT BRITAIN'S ROYAL BALLET HAS BEEN FORCED TO CANCEL PLANS TO PERFORM AT THE FESTIVAL FOR ECONOMIC REASONS, AND THE NATIONAL THEATER OF ENGLAND IS EXPECTED TO CANCEL ALSO. THIS WILL PROBABLY ENCOURAGE A TENDENCY ON THE PART OF THE

FESTIVAL TO CONTACT GROUPS FROM EASTERN EUROPE TO FILL OUT THE PROGRAM, A TENDENCY, DICTATED IN OUR OPINION PURELY BY EXPEDIENCY. THE FACT IS THAT, IN RECENT YEARS, EASTERN EUROPEAN NATIONS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO SEND MAJOR GROUPS TO THE FESTIVAL WHEREAS WESTERN NATIONS ARE APPARENTLY FINDING IT INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT.
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